**U.S. Small Business Administration** 



## Success News

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## **WINES, ETC.**Vintage Libations with Delectable Nuances

San Antonio, TX — You don't have to be a wine connoisseur to shop at Wines, Etc., a local wine retail store located on Stone Oak Parkway. Owners Jeff and Angie Bridges are the wine experts and they make themselves available to assist wine shoppers who are not familiar with this particular libation.

Starting their business was not a difficult concept due to their knowledge. Jeff was in the restaurant industry for ten years and managed a liquor store in Houston prior to venturing into Wines, Etc. Angie states she grew up in a family that enjoyed wine and when old enough, was allowed to drink the various varieties in order to discern their nuances. She says she's learned a lot from Jeff as well.

Wines, Etc. became a reality for Jeff and Angie on June 1, 1998 with an SBA guaranteed loan. "SBA was great. They helped us so much. Really consider the SBA, they were there for us," states Angie Bridges. Because of the industry, Jeff and Angie prepared their own business plan, but did receive counseling assistance from the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE). This process took a year, but it was well worth their time. Their early years weren't without struggles. They had enough faith in

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themselves, their research, and their business to keep operating.

A key factor that keeps their customers coming back, aside from their wealth of knowledge and assortment of wines, is customer service. "We excel in that. We take great pain to know our clientele. My goal is to bring them back," states Angie Bridges.

Jeff and Angie also have a newsletter and wine tasting "Super Saturdays." The newsletter provides their clientele with the names of the selected wines to be tasted on a particular Saturday, as well as recipes straight from "In the Kitchen with Angie." Angie is also a consummate gourmet cook who caters small intimate parties.

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